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ABSTRACT

Designed to demonstrate a variety of ways in which listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities can be built around the study of the drama in the classroom, this collection of materials, lessons, and activities deals with one of the plays most frequently taught in New York City ninth-grade classrooms. The document begins with a general introduction to teaching drama, including ninth-grade goals and objectives, and discussions of teaching drama as both literature and theater, and developing skills in playreading. Worksheets containing techniques for playreading and a checklist of questions for readers of plays are presented next. Material on approaches to teaching drama and on using drama to teach reading skills follows. Next is a description of a resource unit on teaching the play, "A Raisin in the Sun," by Lorraine Hansberry, which includes information on (1) ninth-grade performance objectives; (2) themes; (3) preparatory activities; (4) a classroom critics' checklist worksheet; and (5) a worksheet entitled "Guidelines for Classroom Drama Critics." Fourteen sample lessons centered around "A Raisin in the Sun" and a final worksheet on readers theater comprise the remainder of the guide. (SKC)

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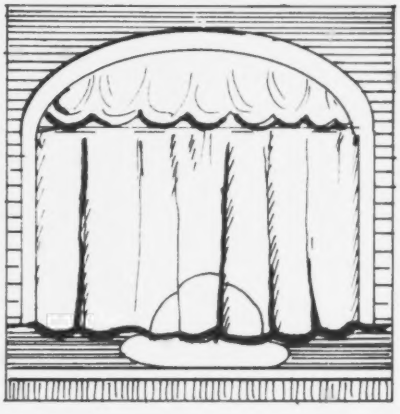
Integrating The Communication Arts



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Teaching Literature Grade 9

Integrating
The Communication Arts

Experimental Drama

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FOREWORD

The materials, lessons, and activities included in the curriculum units which comprise Teaching Literature Grade 9: Integrating the Communication Arts are designed to demonstrate a variety of ways in which listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities can be built around the study of the works of literature (fiction and nonfiction).

To separate the teaching of literature from the teaching of writing skills or effective speaking and listening skills is to fragment English classes. Only by planning lessons which blend all the communication arts can we hope to develop within students a view of English as a unified whole. The works selected for inclusion in the units are those most frequently used in ninth grade classes, based upon a survey of more than sixty schools.

Each unit begins with a general introduction to the teaching of a particular genre followed by specific suggestions for teaching that genre to ninth grade students. Resource guides have been included to assist teachers in developing their own approaches to teach both the genre and the specific work exemplified in the unit.

The sample set of lesson plans represents one approach to teaching the work(s). No teacher will use all the lessons provided. They should be seen as representing a variety of possible lessons to teach the particular work.

We hope that the material included in these units will assist the teacher in using literature to integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities.

Charlotte Frank

Charlotte Frank
Executive Director
Division of Curriculum and
Instruction

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Steven Tribus, Director of Communication Arts, organized and supervised the project and was directly involved in the preparation of the units.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

According to Dwight L. Burton, the most important reason for teaching drama is to discover more about what it is to be a human being; for humanity, with all its complexity and conflict, constitutes the central subject matter of drama.[1] Drama not only mirrors the environment, but helps us to surmount it, to grow in sympathy, imagination, and understanding. The very root of the word "drama"--the Greek drau, to act, to do--suggests the possibilities of drama: it is perhaps our most effective and direct means for depicting and working out social conflicts, moral dilemmas, and personal problems without suffering the specific consequences of our actions.

Mr. Burton further points out that the dramatist compels us to empathize with the play's protagonist, to feel his/her conflicts, yet spares us the actual suffering or indignity his characters must endure. Drama, then, must be viewed as an essential humanizer, a spur to imagination, to insight, to reflection, and hopefully to self-knowledge. The focal theme for the ninth year is: Understanding of Self and Others. From the study of drama, the students will achieve deeper insight into their own attitudes and behavior, as well as those of others.

The teaching of dramatic literature, though similar to teaching of other forms of literature, requires a unique perspective: unlike other genres, dramatic literature is incomplete when read. Plays are written to be presented before an audience. The written text of a work of dramatic literature, then, is only part of an artistic whole. The literature itself is a foundation upon which to build listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. To sense the implications of dialogue, and to visualize both setting and speaker are concomitant skills which can be developed through the study of dramatic literature.

Ninth Grade Goals and Objectives

- One of the goals in teaching drama to ninth year students is to help them develop pleasure and skill in reading and interpreting drama: to acquaint them first with some significant dramatic works, and then with plays for future reading.

- Drama is an integral part of our literary and cultural heritage. The study of its history can provide students with a valuable background in order to appraise the theater of our own day. A second goal is to acquaint students with the dramatic tradition and the role of drama in the history of people.

- The comprehensive theme of the ninth grade is "Understanding of Self and Others." The drama unit contributes to this goal by increasing students' understanding of the insights drama can provide into personal and social problems. More than any other literary experience, drama encourages self-examination, empathy, tolerance, and an increased awareness of what it means to be human.

1. Dwight L. Burton, *Literature Study in the High Schools* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), pp. 132-133.

. Students will need to develop specialized skills to read and to analyze dialogue and stage directions. Students become acquainted with dramatic techniques and conventions through the study of individual plays. In addition, the study of drama must reinforce growth in the basic communication skills.

Teaching Drama as Both Literature and Theater

In teaching drama, the teacher's greatest challenge is to convey the energy, spirit and depth of an art form meant to be seen and heard. Drama is both language and spectacle, a multidimensional event. How does the teacher create such an experience within the classroom? How does the teacher help the student to visualize the action, picture the setting, understand the subtleties of dialogue in order to see the play as a unified whole? How does the teacher plan so that the study of the play is long enough to comprehend the full meaning of the play, yet brief enough so students are still fully engaged by the material? Should the teacher discuss the play in its entirety or scene by scene?

The following suggestions for planning strategies and activities will provide teachers with alternatives to help students better understand and appreciate dramatic literature.

Regardless of the specific activities the teacher may select, it is important that drama be taught both as literature and as theater, rather than as one or the other. The following performance objectives are designed to teach the play in daily lessons both as a literary genre and as a work for the stage.

Performance Objectives Students will be able to:

. visualize setting and character. (The term "visualize" refers to the imaginative construction of sensory experiences, not only seeing.)
. detect foreshadowing, plot unfolding and climax.
. write dialogue, spoken directions and stage directions.
. use stage directions to determine setting, entrances and exits, mood.
. identify the theme of a play.
. write a critical review of a play.
. know basic theater terminology.
. report on an aspect of the history of the theater.
. demonstrate the importance of voice in creating character.
. prepare and present short monologues.
. recognize careers in theater (such as actor, writer, director, stage manager, set designer, costume designer.)
. create improvisations and pantomimes to show motivation, conflict, and character.

Suggested Activities

- Design a model set or prepare sketches for a play studied in class.
- Prepare tape recordings of episodes studied in class.
- Dramatize a short story or scene from a novel.
- Select passages to read that introduce major characters and reveal their dominant trait.
- Create a collage to convey the moods of the play read in class.
- Dramatize a short ballad or scene from a narrative poem.
- Report on a major theatrical personality.
- Diagram the stages of the plot: rising action, climax, falling action.

Developing Skills in Playreading

To develop skills in playreading, it is essential for students to understand how drama differs from other genres. Using students' previous experience with live theater, "live" and taped television shows, and plays previously read, the teacher can impart the following characteristics of drama:

- A play, meant to be enacted, tells a story through dialogue, gesture, and action. Unlike the narrative (short story, novel) which connects all episodes, the play must rely upon the reader to interpret the series of actions.

- A play is divided into sections called acts and scenes. These divisions show the breaks in the action and may be indicated by the falling of a curtain or changes in setting.

- In a play, the author must observe certain rules or conventions and deal with various restrictions. For example, since the story is told through dialogue and action, the author does not step in and comment to the reader or viewer except by using a character who might be called "Narrator." Instead, any comments the author might want to make will serve as stage directions. In the stage directions, the playwright provides information to help explain characters or interpret their actions.

- Since the stage is limited in size and since the author has less time to develop characters, the number of main characters is more limited than in a novel which may easily include several generations.

- Without restrictions on length, the novelist can add as many plot details as he or she chooses. The dramatist, on the other hand, works within a more rigid time structure and must reveal his or her meaning through implication and suggestion.

Once the students are aware of the differences between a play and other forms of literature, the teacher can provide the class with specific techniques for playreading. These techniques help the color, movement, design and emotional tone of the play come to life in the reader's imagination. Successful playreading relies on the reader's imagination to picture the setting, hear the dialogue, envision the gestures, and interpret the play.

Distribute Worksheet 1, "Techniques for Playreading" and Worksheet 2, "Checklist of Questions for Readers." These resources will enable students to master playreading skills independently.

Worksheet 1

Techniques for Playreading

. Read the play aloud if possible.

. Each character, like each person, has a unique voice. As you read,listen for how the voices sound both separately and together. It might be helpful if you think of these voices as similar to the instruments in an orchestra.

. Be sure you know which character is speaking--and to whom!

. Read the stage directions as you go along. These will keep you informed of any changes in the action, any special tone of voice (for example, "teasingly"), and the appearance of any new characters.

. Use your imagination to visualize the setting from the details the playwright gives. Sometimes technical terms may be used to show the stage areas. These terms are: downstage, upstage, wings, L. (stage left), R. (stage right), U.C. (up center). These terms help the performers. For example, stage right means the actor's right (facing the audience.) Downstage is the part of the stage closest to the audience.

Worksheet 2

Checklist of Questions for Readers

1. How does the title relate to what happens in the play?

2. What do the stage directions tell the reader about the setting and characters? (young, old, struggling, happy, etc.)

3. Who are the characters? Describe each one in terms of people with whom you may be familiar.

4. How are they related to each other? (such as: strangers, family members, friends.)

5. What is the main setting? How does it affect the action?

6. What is the dramatic situation? (such as: wedding, funeral, family gathering)

7. What does the dialogue reveal about the personalities, feelings and relationships of the main characters?

8. What is each character doing while he or she is speaking?

Worksheet 2 (continued)

9. What does the character's conversation reveal about events of the past or present? What does the character's conversation suggest about possible future events?

_____

_____

10. If you had to choose one word to summarize the mood or atmosphere of the play, what would it be? (Examples: gloomy, depressing, bright, happy, somber, whimsical, silly).

_____

_____

Approaches to Teaching Drama

Varying the approaches and emphases of the lessons will help maintain the vitality and appeal of the play. The study of the play can become tedious if the teacher attempts to illuminate the students' understanding of every element of the drama. Rather than analyse every aspect of the play, the teacher should vary the emphasis, letting one lesson reveal dialogue, and another irony or contrast. Then the skills emphasized in one play can be transferred to the reading of other plays.

When dealing with the modern play, teachers may require the students to read the entire work prior to the initial discussion, then go back for a second reading and careful analysis of selected sections. This approach puts responsibility on the student for drawing conclusions and for seeing the play as a whole.

In designing a lesson plan for teaching dramatic literature, the teacher may wish to adopt the following procedure:

- Determine objectives for the lesson, focusing on both literary and performance elements.

Performance Objective:

The students will be able to:

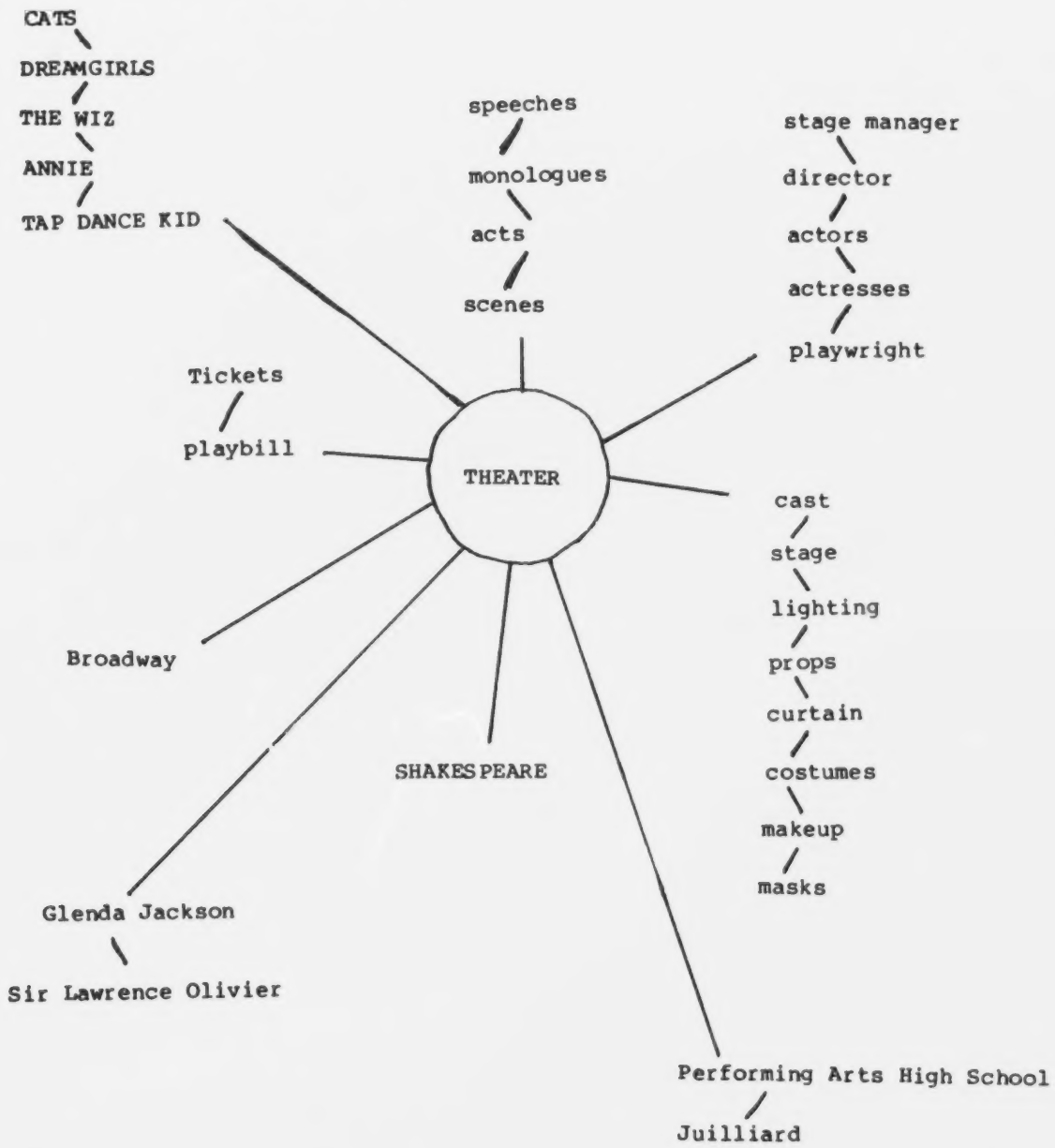
. use stage directions to determine entrances and exits.
. give and take stage directions.
. interpret characters from dialogue.
. recognize the importance of voice in creating characterization.

- Set the stage for the lesson by providing activities which relate the play to the students' experiences. Some motivational activities might include brainstorming prior knowledge, using visual stimuli, drawing on students' knowledge of other media, and using semantic mapping.

  A semantic map may help the teacher determine what the students know about a topic. The teacher asks the students to share thoughts, ideas, and feelings about the topic. Their responses are written on the chalkboard.

For example:

Diagram



- Help students with vocabulary by listing words and phrases from the text. Teachers may use the following techniques to introduce vocabulary:

  . Use the chalkboard to present the unfamiliar word in context. Have students read the words and sentences, and then discuss the meaning of the words. Students may be asked to write the words or expressions.

  . Ask students: "What does this word mean to you?" or "What picture do you have in your mind when you hear this word?" or "Tell me a sentence that has this word in it." This technique will help the teacher ascertain how students understand words which may be in their oral vocabularies. Then the teacher can guide students toward the meaning of the word or expression as it is used in the play.

- Set the purpose for reading by providing one or more questions that relate to the literal comprehension of the text:

  . How does the setting help develop the story?

- Discuss the selection. In this part of the lesson the teacher and students will analyze the script by discussing significant lines. Through this discussion, the students are led to an understanding of the elements of drama--characterization, theme, conflict, and plot. Students should be encouraged to locate lines in the text to support their answers to questions. Teachers can help students learn to draw implications from lines by asking them to choose lines that:

  .foreshadow the future
  .reveal a character trait of the speaker
  .create mood
  .show the speaker's opinion of another character
  .show the speaker's attempt to conceal his thoughts or feelings

Summary and Application

In the summary of the lesson the teacher can review the lesson's basic concepts, skills, or knowledges from another perspective. For example, the students might be asked to act out lines to show an awareness of mood, characterization and meaning.

In Application, the teacher will give the students the opportunity to apply the material learned to new situations. The teacher may ask the students to predict outcomes, supply missing information, or make inferences.

Enrichment

Provision for enrichment should be made. The teacher expands or extends the work with the play, through activities such as improvisation, discussion, art activities, and writing, to allow for practice in listening, as well as actively creative skills.

Using Drama to Teach Reading Skills

The play is an excellent vehicle for teaching reading skills since the reader must infer what the dialogue reveals about the action, the characters' personalities and their motives. The teacher may duplicate sections of the play and formulate questions to guide the students towards recognizing inferences, figures of speech, tone, details, and main ideas. The following questions can be used to develop these reading skills:[2]

Asagai: Do you remember the first time you met me at school? You came up to me and you said--and I thought you were the most serious little thing I had ever seen--you said: "Mr. Asagai--I want very much to talk with you. About Africa. You see, Mr. Asagia, I am looking for my identity." (He laughs.)

Beneatha: (Not laughing) Yes--

Assagai: Such a serious one. (There is a pause) So--you like the robes? You must take excellent care of them--they are from sister's personal wardrobe.

Beneatha: (With incredulity) You--you sent all the way home--for me?

Asagai: (With charm) For you--I would do much more ... Well, that is what I came for. I must go.

Beneatha: Will you call me Monday?

Asagai: Yes ... We have a great deal to talk about. I mean about identity and time and all that.

Beneatha: Time?

Asagai: Yes. About how much time one needs to know what one feels.

Beneatha: You never understood that there is more than one kind of feeling which can exist between a man and a woman--or, at least, there should be.

Asagai: (Shaking his head negatively but gently) No. Between a man and a woman there need to be only one kind of feeling. I have that for you ... Now even ... right this moment ...

Beneatha: I know--and by itself--it won't do. I can find that anywhere.

Asagai: For a woman it should be enough.

Beneatha: I know--because that's what it says in all the novels that men write. But it isn't. Go ahead and laugh--but I'm not interested in being someone's little episode in America or--one of them! (Asagai has burst into laughter again) That's funny as hell, huh!

Asagai: It's just that every American girl I have known has said that to me. White--black--in this you are all the same. And the same speech, too!

2. Excerpted from: Benita Somerfield, Ed. *Skills in Reading 2* (New York: Cambridge Book Company, 1974), pp. 209-211.

Questions:

1. Which of the following words does not describe Beneatha?

   (1) serious
   (2) submissive
   (3) honest
   (4) searching

2. When Beneatha stated that she was looking for her identity, she

   (1) hinted that she didn't know who her parents were.
   (2) implied that she wanted to marry Asagai.
   (3) meant that she wanted to understand her deepest self.
   (4) showed that she liked Asagai and wanted to start a conversation.

3. We can infer that just prior to this conversation, Asagai

   (1) gave Beneatha a gift.
   (2) asked Beneatha to marry him.
   (3) visited her sister.
   (4) told Beneatha that they should stop seeing each other.

4. From their conversation, we may infer that

   (1) Beneatha is attracted to Asagai, but he is not attracted to her.
   (2) Asagai is attracted to Beneatha, but she does not care for him.
   (3) Asagai and Beneatha are not attracted to one another.
   (4) there is a mutual attraction between Asagai and Beneatha.

5. Beneatha's statement that "by itself--it won't do" (line 26), means that she

   (1) is looking for love, not just physical pleasure.
   (2) wants to marry a man who is wealthy.
   (3) needs more time to know how she feels about Asagai.
   (4) is flirting with Asagia.

6. Beneatha gets angry because she feels that Asagai

   (1) is behaving too aggressively.
   (2) is not sincere.
   (3) thinks of women as objects, not as individuals.
   (4) considers her an easy conquest.

Answers and Explanations:

1. (2) Her interest in identity and in finding a love relationship that is spiritual as well as physical reveals Beneatha's seriousness, choice (1). In a very honest way, choice (3), she tells Asagai that physical attraction is not enough, and Beneatha's desire to find out who she is shows that she is searching, choice (4). She is not, however, submissive. Beneatha does not give in to Asagai's wishes, but maintains her own point of view.

2. (3) Beneatha wants to know who she really is. As a black American, she desires to understand African culture, believing that aspects of her personality may have their roots in the African heritage.

3. (1) We can infer from line 8 that Asagai has just given Beneatha a gift of African robes which had belonged to his sister.

4. (4) In lines 23-25, Asagai tells Beneatha of his attraction for her. Beneatha's attraction to Asagai is evident by her eager question, "Will you call me Monday?" (line 14).

5. (1) Beneatha tells Asagai that she "can find that [a relationship based on physical attraction] anywhere," and that she doesn't want to be his "little episode in America" (line 31). We can infer that Beneatha requires a relationship that is built on spiritual and intellectual closeness as well as on sexual attraction.

6. (3) Asagai believes that a woman should be satisfied by knowing that a man is attracted to her (line 28). Beneatha retorts that it is not enough. We can infer that she wants to be preceived, not as just another attractive woman to be wooed and won, but as an individual--loved for her individuality.

Follow-up Writing Activities:

The following writing activities may be used to enrich the drama lesson:

- Compare and contrast two characters within the same play. Use evidence from the text to support your point of view.
- Rewrite the ending of a play to fit another interpretation.
- Write another scene the author might have included.
- Write a dramatic sketch suggested by a news story, choosing one with obvious conflicts.
- Report on major theatrical personalities.
- Write a letter to one of the characters in the play.
- Rewrite a scene in narrative style.

Enrichment Activities:

- Design a poster advertising a coming performance of the play studied in class.

- Design a fashion illustration for the costumes or props for the play.
- Construct a drama-oriented bulletin board display.
- With a partner, do a scene for two actors/actresses from a play not studied in class.
- Write an original script to be produced and performed before an audience.
- Compile a readers theater script based on themes suggested by the play studied in class.
- Research and report on a career in the theater.
- Interview participants in a community theater group and write a report on a community theater group in your area.

Additional Ideas:

- Read the casting notices in the weekly newspaper Backstage. Choose one audition to go to. Interview some of those waiting to audition.
- Go to a play. After the play, go backstge and talk with performers.
- Groups of three or more students may present scenes from the play under discussion or another play of their choice.

RESOURCE UNIT

A Raisin in the Sun

by Lorraine Hansberry

Introduction to Raisin in the Sun

This resource unit contains material for teachers to use in planning lessons to accompany A Raisin in the Sun. Because it contains more material than any teacher would need for a class, teachers can select activities, themes, and objectives in keeping with the needs of each class.

The sample lessons represent one approach to teach A Raisin in the Sun.

Performance Objectives Students will be able to:

- list the differences between narrative and dramatic literature.
- discuss and analyze the limitations of theater as a medium, and how these limitations affect the task of the playwright.
- understand how the theatergoer participates in the illusion of the theater.
- read and analyze the poem, "Montage of a Dream Deferred."
- relate the poem to their own personal experience.
- understand the connection between the poem and the play A Raisin in the Sun.
- examine how the play's setting contributes to the mood and conflict.
- Analyze how the setting affects the dreams of the characters.
- identify the elements which disrupt the Younger family.
- list all the conflicts between people in the play.
- recognize and determine the concepts and themes in a literary work.
- identify and trace the theme of "the search for identity" throughout the work.
- analyze how the matriarchal nature of the family structure contributes to Walter's dissatisfaction.
- locate the climax of the play.
- trace the changes in the main characters which make the climax believeable.

This selection of objectives is not meant for total coverage in every class. Some apply to particular lessons in the sample plans which follow; some are inferred from the approaches used in these plans, or are anticipated from the discussions they should provoke. The teacher must select and tailor each choice according to the needs of the class.

Themes

- the importance of dreams and hopes for the future
- search for identity
- family leadership: matriarchy versus patriarchy
- the effect of environment on a person's life
- the value of parental advice
- real and false dreams
- the importance of maintaining ideals despite lack of support from others
- the dimensions of courage
- the generation gap
- ethnic pride
- the conflict between idealism and pragmatism
- personal values

Preparatory Activities

To acquaint students with the concept of drama, and its function in our lives, the teacher can use television as a point of departure to discuss the following: [3]

- Why do people watch television so frequently?
- Why do some people prefer watching televison to reading or going to the movies?
- How do live theater performances fulfill the same needs?
- How do live performances differ from televised or filmed presentations?
- Does a play always present life as it is?
- By what means do the actors, directors, and technicians create a world of illusion into which the audience is drawn? Be sure to discuss the elements that must be present for suspension of disbelief to occur.
- To what extent does the audience help in maintaining this illusion?

To acquaint students with the structure of the theater and the use of its features to create a world of illusion the teacher may do any one of the following:

. Take the class on a guided tour of the backstage area of the school auditorium or a local theater. A representative of a local theater group, a drama teacher, or a student member of a dramatics club might guide the group and explain the following features and their functions:

apron	flies
proscenium	teaser
proscenium arch	tormentors
set	borders
flat	foots
backdrop	backstage
backing	wings
batten	callboard

. If possible, have a qualified person demonstrate some of the effects which can be achieved through the use of teasers and tormentors, lighting, and simple objects for sound production.

. Show the class pictures or models of various stage settings. Include copies of the Globe Theater and its modern counterpart, the thrust stage theater. Examples of the latter include the Vivian Beaumont Theater and the ANTA theater in Buffalo, and the theater in Stratford, Ontario. What are the differences between performances designed for a proscenium stage and those designed for an apron stage? What differences might there be in the effects of these performances on the audience?

3. Adapted from: *Performing Arts Education* (Albany, NY: University of the State of New York/State Education Department, Bureau of Secondary Curriculum Development, 1968).

- Discuss with the class the use of scenery, costuming, makeup, and lighting in creating illusion. What can be accomplished with limited scenery and costuming? Show the students pictures or models of simple sets with limited props to suggest scenes and a small cast in limited costuming.

- Discuss with the class the old saying, "Never turn your back on the audience." Help them to see that the stage is a room with one wall missing so that the audience can observe that world without actually being a part of it. But the people in that world are aware of being watched and deliberately try to involve the audience in their world. Sometimes the actors are so convincing that members of the audience lose themselves in the illusion (for example, the woman who walked up on the stage and clobbered the star of The Dark at the Top of the Stairs because she "hated that type of man").

- To prepare students for a critical look at a dramatic performance whether on television, in film or live theater (including a school play), the teacher can duplicate Worksheet 3, "Classroom Critics' Checklist." Then review the checklist with the students, highlighting areas on which the students should focus as they read the text. Students should be encouraged to add other items as appropriate.

Worksheet 3

Classroom Critics' Checklist

A theater critic is an expert in theater. In order to evaluate a theatrical performance, you should be aware of what to look for during the performance. Here are some items for you to consider before and after a performance.

Storyline/Plot:

- Was there a definite storyline or plot? _____
- Did the story make sense? _____
- Was the story believable? _____
- Was the story suspenseful? _____

Music:

- How was music used in the performance?

_____

_____

- Did the music highlight the storyline?

_____

_____

- Did the music highlight the characterization?

_____

_____

- How did the tempo of the music and the sound quality affect the mood of the performance?

_____

_____

Characterization:

- How did the principal performers develop their roles?

_____

_____

Worksheet 3 (continued)

. What actions, gestures, and movements made their characters memorable?

. Are the characters stereotyped, or are they well-developed and realistic?

. What visual and verbal flashbacks are used?

. How is the story divided into segments?

. Write a brief description of the plot.

Setting: (Time and location of different scenes)

. If all the action took place in one place and time, tell where and when.

. If there were different settings, name them:

Worksheet 3 (continued)

Sets: (Scenery and props)

. Were the sets realistic? (For example, was real furniture used?)

. Were the sets used to set a mood?

. How did the sets contribute to the action and plot?

Lighting:

. How was the lighting used?

. How did the lighting (or lack of it-darkness) affect the acting and plot?

. Did you enjoy the performance more or less because of the lighting?

Costumes:

. What made the costumes special or unusual?

. Which character or characters came to your attention most vividly because of costuming?

Worksheet 3 (continued)

Conflict:

. What was the major problem or conflict?

_____

_____

. Was the conflict internal, external, or both?

_____

_____

. How was the conflict resolved?

_____

_____

Theme:

. What themes or messages did the performance present?

_____

_____

. Do you agree with the message of the performance?

_____

_____

To prepare students for writing their own reviews of a dramatic performance, have them:

- Locate reviews of recent performances that were published in newspapers and magazines.
- Cut out reviews that are of interest and bring them to class.
- The teacher may wish to duplicate and review the style and content sample reviews with the students.
- After the analysis of these reviews is completed, use Worksheet 4, "Guidelines for Classroom Drama Critics."

Worksheet 4

Guidelines for Classroom Drama Critics

You are the drama critic for a major newspaper. Your job is to go to dramatic performances and review them for the public. You have your own column and byline.

You have been asked to write a review of _____ .

Include in your review:

- the name of the performance.
- the names of the writer, director, principal actors, and other persons involved with the performance.
- the date you attended.
- what you think about this performance.

- To prepare your review, make sure to go over your responses to the questions on Worksheet 3 "Classroom Critics' Checklist." Decide how you wish to organize the material, sketch out your review, and begin writing.

- After you have written a first draft, read the review to yourself, and then to a classmate or teacher.Decide what, if anything, you wish to change. Then begin a second draft. After, revise your review until you believe it is ready for publication. Print or type it below in the form of a newspaper column as shown in the sample reviews.

Enrichment Activities:

. To improve students' awareness of the influence of the dramatic arts in the media, include some of the following activities:

- Look in the newspaper and in TV Guide or other similar sources for listings of programs that feature dramatic arts, such as situation comedy, dramatic action series, and serial drama (soap opera). Make a list of a few such programs.

- Review one of these programs or films.

- Assemble a photo montage by cutting and pasting newspaper or magazine pictures to show what the program is about, or to express your feelings and opinions about it.

. To help students develop career awareness and appreciate how many individuals must work together to make a show go on, ask the students to do the following:

- List the jobs related to a theater performance. These may include:

director
stagehand
costume designer
dresser
hairdresser
makeup artist
lighting designer
writer
electrician
choreographer
set designer
construction worker
masseuse or masseur
actor
dancer

- Discuss students' ideas of what these jobs entail and why they are all necessary to create the illusions of the world of theater.

- Select a specific job that interests you for further research. Your research might include finding out what kind of training is necessary, where such training can be acquired, what kind of salaries can be earned in this field, and who are some outstanding members of this profession.

SAMPLE LESSONS

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 1: Differences Between the Play, the Novel, and the Short Story

Aim:

. What are the differences between the novel and the play?

. What are the differences between the short story and the play?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. list the differences between the novel and the play.
. list the differences between the short story and the play.
. discuss and analyze the special problems and difficulties a playwright faces.

Motivation:

- How many of you have ever seen a play on Broadway?
- Discuss plays they've seen and how students responded to that particular drama.
- What other media resemble a live play? (films, TV, street theater)
- What are some similarities between a Broadway play and the other media? (e.g., dialogue) Some differences? (use of film allows for multiple settings, montage, flashbacks; use of theater allows immediacy, warmth, audience involvement)

Development:

- Readers are most familiar with two kinds of literature. Which are they?

- Why haven't we read more plays? (Plays are meant to be seen.)

- Describe some of the differences between a play and a novel. (List on chalkboard.)

- Describe some of the differences between a play and a short story. (List on chalkboard.)

- What are some of the limitations a playwright faces that writers of stories and novels do not? (Elicit: all events and characterization must emerge from what happens on stage, through dialogue, costumes, references to other characters. Author cannot narrate, comment, judge, or evaluate.)

- Of these three genres (the play, the novel and the short story,) which offers the most challanges to its author? Why?

Summary:

- We are going to read a play about a Black family. The play was successful on Broadway, and was later made into a musical play. It is called A Raisin in the Sun, and was written by Lorraine Hansberry.

Homework:

- You all have hopes and dreams about your life and your future. Describe one of your dreams for the future in writing.

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 2: Motivation for A Raisin in the Sun

Aim:

. What effect do unfulfilled hopes and dreams have on a person's life?

. How is the poem "A Dream Deferred" by Langston Hughes related to the play?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. read and analyze the poem "A Dream Deferred."
. relate the poem to their own personal experiences.
. understand the connection between the poem and the play A Raisin in the Sun.

Motivation:

. Students read some of their homework paragraphs on dreams and visions for their future.

- How would you feel if you were never able to achieve these dreams?

- How might your disappointment affect you as a person?

- What older people do you know who have been disappointed in life? Describe their behavior.

- Is there a balance as life progresses between dreams that are fulfilled and some that are not unfulfilled? Are some dreams too unrealistic? Does life give us good things compared to some of our unrealistic dreams?

. Discussion of student experiences.

- Why is it hard to predict a person's reaction to failure?

- We are going to read a poem on this subject.

"A Dream Deferred"
by Langston Hughes

Lorraine Hansberry took the title of her play from this poem.

Vocabulary:
deferred

Development:

. Teacher reads poem twice while students follow along.

- To what does the poet compare deferred dreams?

. Elicit:

a raisin in the sun
fester like a sore and then run
stink like rotten meat
crust and sugar over like a syrupy sweet
sags like a heavy load
explode

- What emotions might you feel if you said your dream dried up "like a raisin in the sun"?

- Why?

. Relate each comparison used in the poem to personal experiences students may have had in boy/girl situations, teacher/student situations, parent/child situations and in friend/friend situations.

For example,

a. raisin in the sun = depression/rejection by opposite sex
b. explode = temper tantrum at parental denial of permission

- Are any of the different reactions healthier than others?
- Why do some dreams that are deferred "dry up like a raisin in the sun" and others "explode"?
- Under what conditions is failure particularly difficult to handle?
- How much was the object desired?
- How hard did one work to achieve the goal?
- What sacrifices were made for the dream?
- Were the sacrifices more important than the dream?
- How long was the dream deferred?
- Did you think you were competing with others for <u>your</u> dream?
- How so?
- Can you ever have opponents to your dream?
- Who or what might these opponents be?
- Are there conditions that we can't <u>control</u> in making our dreams come true? (Someone else gets the job; athletic injuries and accidents; lack of talent or finances for a particular dream).
- Do we need to accept some of these conditions? Why? Why not? How can we change others?
- If we can always work toward our dream, can we guarantee that it will "come true?" What is the difference between <u>working toward</u> a dream and <u>making</u> a dream come true? Can we force our dream to happen? Why? Why not?

Summary/Application:

- We have related this poem to the different reactions an individual might exhibit in response to failure in "A Dream Deferred."

- In what ways can different groups relate to a common dream? (Discussion of group examples -- e.g. WASPS, Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, Poles, Soviet Jews, etc.)

- What similiarities are there in the dreams people have for themselves and their families? (to feed, clothe and shelter themselves; to provide good education and adequate health care for their children; to ensure the well-being and preservation of their particular group and customs)

- The play A Raisin in the Sun is about a Black family. As we will see, many of the feelings we have discussed today are experienced by the particular family members both as unique individuals and as Black people.

Homework:

- Read Act 1, Scene 1.

- Before completing the entire scene, stop at the end of the description of setting. Make a list of all the things you now know about this family. Then complete the reading.

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 3: Act 1

Aim: What does the opening scene of the play (exposition) reveal about the main characters?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. examine and list what the opening description of setting reveals about the family background.
. examine and list what the author's later description reveals about the characters.
. examine and discuss what the early dialogue reveals about each character.
. analyze why each character seems unhappy and what dream each one has.

Motivation:

- Let's imagine that you are going for a job interview for a position in a bank. You decide to go straight from school, dressed exactly as you are.

- Will you get the job? Why or why not?

- How could you improve your chances to get the job?

- Why is the manner in which you dress so important? (Employer has little time to assess your work -- but he or she can assess your effort to appear presentable for the job. Applicant must make a good first impression. Dress is the most obvious way to reveal things about yourself.)

- In what way is the opening scene of a play similar to the manner of dress for a job interview? (Brevity of play makes early revelation essential.)

- In what ways can an author reveal information about his characters and their current situation? (Setting, description/narration, dialogue)

- Scene 1 of a play is called the exposition or introduction because it introduces us to the characters and their situation--or exposes the characters' personalities, situations or flaws rather quickly.

Development:

- For homework, you were asked to stop reading after Scene 1 and list all the things you knew about the family background. Let us list on the board what you learned from merely the first two pages.

. Teacher lists from student responses--times, places, dignity, run-down, poor, small apartment. Refer to text for proof. State page and character.

- From the setting we also get one more piece of information.

  - How many people are living together?
  - Why? (Fictional reasons, traditional set-up)
  - What are some advantages to having three generations living in the same house? Disadvantages?

  - From the description of the family situation and setting, what problems might you expect the family to have?

  - Why is each of the main characters, Walter, Ruth, Mama and Beneatha, unhappy?

  - One way, then, to learn about the main characters is through the setting. What are other ways? Let us see what we can learn about each of the characters from the author's description.

. Place a chart on the board with a column for each of the four main characters. As students give responses based on textual description--author's comments--list in appropriate column.

  Ruth - "Ruth is about thirty..."
  Walter - "He is a lean, intense young man..."
  Beneatha - "She is about twenty..."
  Mama - "She is a woman in her early sixties..."

- We said that the best way an author can reveal his characters in this early scene is through dialogue.

- What do we learn about Ruth from her dialogue early in the scene? Refer to text. (Responsible for family, seems tough, but is gentle as we see in speech with Travis, wearily accepting of situation, etc.)

- What does Ruth want out of life? What is her dream?

- What do we learn about Walter from his opening action of giving Travis 50¢ in defiance of Ruth?

- Why doesn't Ruth allow Walter to discuss his dreams with her? ("Honey, you never say...")

- Discuss what Walter's quote, "That is just what is wrong with the colored woman..." reveals about him.

- What is Walter's dream? How would he like to achieve it?

- What do we learn about Beneatha when we first meet her? (hostile, sarcastic)

- How is she different from the rest of the family? (intellectual)

- What is Beneatha's dream?

- What do we learn about Mama from her opening lines? From her later dialogue?

- What does Mama want out of life?

Summary:

- We have learned a great deal about the Younger family from just a few pages.

- What three devices does an author use to reveal characters to the reader or viewer?

Application:

- An interior monologue lets us in on a character's thoughts.

- Write an interior monologue that might be appropriate for one of the Younger family members. Use the character's dream as a starting point.

Homework:

- In one paragraph, explain what the term "generation gap" means. Discuss the ways you and your parents differ in terms of dress, ideas, tastes in music and movies.

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 4: Act 1

Aim: In what areas do we usually see the conflict between the older and younger generation evident in the Younger family?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. discuss the areas in which they differ from their parents.
. discuss and list the areas of difference between Mama (older generation) and her children.
. recognize and define the concept of "themes" in a literary work.

Motivation:

- Describe the areas of agreement and disagreement which you and your parents have.

- Let us look at the paragraphs you wrote for homework and see if we can infer and examine the areas of conflict between parents and children today.

. Discuss and then list areas of conflict on chalkboard.

- Why do differences in tastes, values and ideas between the generations often lead to arguments?

- How does our discussion of the "generation gap" relate to the Younger family?

Development:

- Who represents the older generation in the Younger family? (Mama)

- Who represents the younger generation in the Younger family? (Walter, Beneatha).

- Read quote: "They frighten me ..."

- What does she mean when she says this?

- What differences exist between Walter and Mama?
  (Mama: small dreams, acceptance of existing lifestyle, non-materialistic
  Walter: big dreams, money-oriented, willing to be corrupt, make payoff to get the liquor store)

- With whom do you sympathize? Why?

- What differences exist between Mama and Beneatha? (make list)
  (Mama - traditionally religious
  Beneatha - Atheist
  Mama - wants to marry George for money
  Beneatha - wants to be a doctor; refuses to marry, needs more)

. All of above should be listed on chalkboard. Textual references should be used.

- Should anyone coming from the Younger family's circumstances, like Beneatha, be encouraged to marry for money?

- When Beneatha argues with Mama over God, Ruth says "You think you a woman, Bonnie--but you still a little girl. What you did was childish--so you get treated like a child."

  - What does she mean?

  - Do you agree or disagree with her? Explain your point of view.

  - What alternative did Beneatha have instead of angrily defending her ideas?

- Should we include Ruth as a member of the younger generation? Why? Why not?

Summary:

- Most literary works are interested mainly in two things--revealing characters with whom we can identify, thereby learning something about our own lives, and expressing the ideas of the author. These ideas are called themes.

- What theme was being expressed in this first scene? Use specific references to the text to support your ideas.

Enrichment:

- We have already discussed the meaning of the word "symbol."
- What is a "symbol?"
- What symbol is used in the play? (plant/food; "Ripeness is all," re: Shakespeare)
- Read quotes of Mama "Got to admire they got spirit..." (near end of scene)
- What does she mean?
- What does the plant stand for (symbolize)?
- In what way is the dialogue or speech pattern in this play different from most of the prose we have read?
- How does the speech pattern or dialect make the play more effective? (adds realism)
- The scene ends with Ruth fainting. What do you think is wrong with her?

. Show the class one of the following films: Conformity, Nobody Waved Goodbye, or The Young Americans. Have the class discuss the film.

. Have interested students look into any of the following books and write a short review.

- The Ordeal of Change - Eric Hoffer
- Growing Up Absurd - Paul Goodman
- Coming of Age in America - Edgar Friedenberg
- The Road Less Travelled - M. Scott Peck

. Have students bring any of the following records to class. Play them and discuss the generation gap as it is discussed in these songs:

- Kharma Chameleon - Boy George
- Girls Just Wanna Have Fun - Cyndi Lauper
- Other songs from top 40 which students think illustrate the clash between generations

Homework:

- Read Act 1, Scene 2.
- Define matriarchy and patriarchy. Using your definition as background material, write a paragraph describing the conflict between Walter and Mama. Include in your discussion whom you agree with and why.

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 5: Act 1, Scene 2

Aim:

- Why is "conflict" central to a drama?

- What conflicts arise in the Younger family?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. understand the importance of "conflict" to a play.
. examine the two conflicts that arise in the Younger family.

Motivation:

- Let us imagine that your parent came home tonight from work and said that he/she is going to be relocated in the job. The entire family will have to move. Ask several volunteers to improvise this scene as it might occur around the dinner table.

- What conflicts did this situation cause in the family?

- Were the conflicts internal, external or both?

- Good drama centers around a situation that causes conflict.

- Why is "conflict" so important to a play? (Imitates real life, creates interest, reveals characters through their reaction to and handling of the problems of conflict).

Development:

- What situation is introduced that creates a problem for the family? (Receipt of $10,000 check)

- Describe the conflict between Walter and Mama that follows the receipt of this check.

. Students refer to their homework paragraphs.

- How do both characters' values contribute to the conflict?

- What are Walter's values? (Use text to locate answer.)

- What are Mama's values?

- Is Walter's bitterness toward Mama for refusing him justifiable?
- How does Walter react when he is frustrated? (Yells, drinks, leaves house)
- Is this behavior justifible? Why or why not?
- Is there any reasonable explanation for his childishness?
  (Mama's dominance over the household has never allowed him to be a man and/or adult.)
  e.g "Walter, sit down...You still in my house and my presence."
- Let's "guess ahead." How do you think this conflict will be resolved?

. Place the following terms on the board:

ethnic identity
"Black is beautiful"
assimilation

- What is meant by the term "ethnic identity"?
- How is it related to the expression, "Black is beautiful"?
- What is meant by "assimilation"?
- In what ways are the terms "ethnic identity" and "assimilation" opposite?
- How do these ideas highlight the conflict in the play?
- What does Beneatha mean when she refers to the family situation as "acute ghetto-ites"?
- In what ways has Asagai influenced Beneatha?
- Why was she able to be influenced by his ideas?
- Beneatha has a conflict in choosing between Asagai and George. List advantages and disadvantages of each. If you were she, whom would you choose? Why?
- How do you think this situation/conflict will be resolved?

Summary:

- By the end of Act I, what have we learned about the Younger family? In what ways did the author provide this information? (Emphasize: exposition of characters, introduction of problem/conflict, issues/themes, importance of setting, description and dialogue.)

- Why is this a good place for Act 1 to end?

Enrichment:

- How does Walter disappoint Mama at the end? (wouldn't tell Ruth not to abort the baby)

- Why can't he say what Mama would like him to say?

Homework:

- Read Act 2, Scene 1.

- In a brief paragraph, discuss the conflict of ideas between George and Beneatha.

- Look up the name "Prometheus." In a sentence or two explain what George meant by calling Walter "Prometheus."

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 6: Act 2

Aim:

How does Act 2, Scene 1 focus on the conflict between idealism and pragmatism?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. understand the differences between two philosophical approaches to life -- idealism and pragmatism.
. discuss the value of each.
. discuss and list examples from the text that illustrate each viewpoint and evaluate the consequences inherent in each example.

Motivation:

- What school rules do you believe are unfair and should be changed? (Student discussion)

- Let's select one rule that should be changed.

  - What can you, as a student, do about changing this rule?

  - What might be some of the consequences of these actions?

- Would you take these actions? Why/Why not?

  - Describe your reactions to someone who has the courage to take action in spite of the consequences.

  - How might we describe such a person? (idealist)

  - How might we describe someone who would avoid such action because the risks are too dangerous? (realist, pragmatist)

- What other situations involve idealism?

- What famous people could be called idealists? (founders of this country, pioneers, original thinkers, Martin Luther King, etc.)

- Why are idealists so valuable to society? (their ideas, progress, etc.)

. In what ways are pragmatists/realists valuable to society? (family stability, continuity of tradition, etc.)

. How do these understandings relate to Act 2, Scene 1?

Development:

- There are three situations that arise in this scene that highlight the conflict between idealism and pragmatism. One of them relates to the homework assignment you did last night.

. Ask students to read and discuss some of their paragraphs on the conflict between Beneatha and George.

- What points of view does each hold? (George --"plays the game"-- goes to school and wants to enter "establishment." Beneatha criticises "assimilationism.")

- What merit is there in George's point of view? In Beneatha's?

- With whom do you agree? Why?

- What might be the end result of each one's point of view?

. Another important incident is the confrontation between Walter and George.

- Why is Walter hostile to George?

- Why is George hostile to Walter?

- What merit is there in each of their beliefs?

- With whom do you agree? Why?

- From a psychological point of view, what else might be causing Walter's hostility to George?

. The third incident that highlights this conflict is Mama's purchasing a house.

- Describe the house Mama purchased.

- In what ways can she be described as an idealist?

- What might a pragmatist say about her purchase?

- Do you believe that Mama did the right thing? Why? Why not?

- Let us "guess ahead." How do you think this will work out? What problems might arise?

Summary/Application:

- What does George mean when he calls Walter "Prometheus?" Students may refer to homework assignment.

- What qualities of character must one possess if one chooses the idealistic path?

- Is being an idealist worth the risks involved and the price one must often pay?

Enrichment:

- Walter says to Mama, at the end of the scene:

  "You run our lives like you want to... So you butchered up a dream of mine..."

  - What does he mean?
  - Do you agree with what Mama did with the money?

Homework:

- Read Act 2, Scene 2.
- In a few sentences, discuss why you think Walter stayed out of work.

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 7: Act 2

Aim:

. How does the playwright create sympathy for Walter?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. recognize the contrast between Walter and the other male characters.
. discuss the wisdom of Lena's giving Walter the remainder of her money.
. discuss how the matriarchal nature of the family structure contributes to Walter's dissatisfaction.

Motivation:

- Most people enjoy babies and young children. We find them cute and their behavior adorable. When an adult behaves in a childish manner, we often call it immaturity.

- What behavior patterns would cause a grown person to be labeled "immature"? (List on board.)

- What might cause a grown person to still behave in an immature manner?

Development:

- How can we relate what we have just said to Walter Younger?

- How old is Walter Younger?

- In what ways does he prove that he is still immature? (List on chalkboard)

- What might be some reasons Walter failed to report for work, knowing he risked losing his job? (Refer to homework)

- What might have caused Walter to be immature at his adult age?

- What would Walter need to do to "grow up"?
- How can members of his family help him mature?

- Why does Mama agree to give him the remainder of the money, $3500?
- How does Walter react to this decision?
- Is Mama's decision a wise one?
- How do you predict this will turn out?

Summary:

- What are the differences between George and Walter?

Application:

- In the previous lesson, we have referred to Walter as an idealist.

- Is every idealist immature?
- What are some differences between a mature idealist and an immature idealist?
- Why is the mature idealist very valuable for our society?

Homework:

- Read Act 2, Scene 3.

- Lindner says, "You just can't force people to change their hearts, son."

- Write a short paragraph agreeing or disagreeing with that statement. Support your position by stating several reasons.

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 8

Aim:

How does Act 2, Scene 3 highlight the conflicts which arise in maintaining one's personal integrity while facing financial problems?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. evaluate the problem-solving process undertaken by the three main characters.
. list the effects of prejudice and financial problems on the Younger family.

Motivation:

. Ask students to complete this sentence: "No _____ allowed!" with the name of their religion, race, nationality, sex, or other group affiliation.

. Have them write a short paragraph describing how reading the completed sentence made them feel. Encourage students to share their reactions with other members of the class.

  - How would you feel if you weren't allowed to do something because of your group affiliation?
  - Why would you react this way?
  - How does this discussion relate to Act 2, Scene 3?

Development:

- What are some groups that have been persecuted throughout history? List on chalkboard.

- How did the group in power oppress these groups? (segregation, ghettos, torture, murder, slavery, holocaust)

- What groups are still persecuted violently in today's world? (Lebanese, Indians, South Africans, etc.)

- How is racial prejudice reflected in the economic situation in America today?

- How are the poor treated in our society? Use examples from media.

- How does poverty affect self-esteem? In men? In women? (Use examples from play.)

- How does racial prejudice affect the group that is the victim? The group that oppresses?

- How is racial conflict expressed in this play?

- Read examples from text and discuss the quotes:

  Lindner: - "You've got to admit that a man, right or wrong....."
  - "What do you think you are going to gain by moving into a neighborhood where you just aren't wanted?"

- Who was the first to understand Lindner's real purpose for visiting the Youngers?

- What does Beneatha mean when she says:

  Lindner: - "We are prepared to make your family a very generous offer."
  Beneatha: - "Thirty pieces and not a coin less!"

- Lindner says: "You just can't force people to change their hearts, son."

- What effect will this expression of prejudice have on the integrity and self-esteem of the Youngers?

- This play was written in the 1950s. Does this kind of situation still exist in the 1980s? Explain?

Summary:

- Do you agree with the way the Younger family handled their need for self-worth? Explain your point of view.

Application:

- What is society's responsibility toward the poor and the oppressed? Consider government, school and church.

Enrichment:

- We have discussed how the author uses Mama's plant as a symbol.

. Read "Fixing my plant..... It expresses me."

  - What does the plant symbolize?

  - Why is it being brought in after Lindner's visit?

. Divide the class into groups to write roleplay scenarios which center on conflicts of personal values and practical problems. The situations might be based on general conflicts such as loyalty to a friend versus peer group pressure; responsibility versus "having a good time," etc.

Follow-up Activities: [4]

- Have interested students research the Open Housing Bill of 1968 and report on its provisions to the class.
- Ask volunteers to write letters to neighborhood clothing retail outlets that handle African clothing, asking them to explain to the class the styles, origins and uses of the material they stock.
- If possible, show the class the movie, The Eye of the Beholder, and discuss how each character is prejudiced. The film illustrates the role of perception in preconceived ideas.

4. Adapted from: Richter Irving, *New World of Ideas*, Teacher's Manual (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich, 1970), p. 55.

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 9: Act 2, Scene 3

Aim:

- What effect does Walter's loss of the insurance money have on each member of the Younger family?

- What functions in the play does Act 2 serve?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. discuss the impact on someone's life of a significant event.
. list and discuss the impact of Walter's loss of the insurance money on each member of the Younger family.
. understand the purpose of "rising action" in this, and any play.

Motivation:

- Most of us have had at least one experience in our lives that we will never forget. Sometimes it may change us in a significant way. This experience can be a very important event or meeting someone who made a lasting impression.

- Describe some examples of such significant occurrences. List on chalkboard. (e.g., death, birth, wedding, moving, divorce, etc.)

- What experience can you think of in your lives that had a special, important impact on you?

- In what way did it change you?

- Why do events that seem very sad and upsetting when they occur sometimes have positive results later on? Give examples.

Development:

- How does our discussion relate to the play?

- Describe the dramatic event that occurred in Act 2, Scene 3.

- Why is the timing of this event especially poor? (Night after Lindner's visit)

- Why does Mama, who has always loved and protected Walter, beat him at the end of the scene?
- Should the family have comforted him or criticized him? Why?

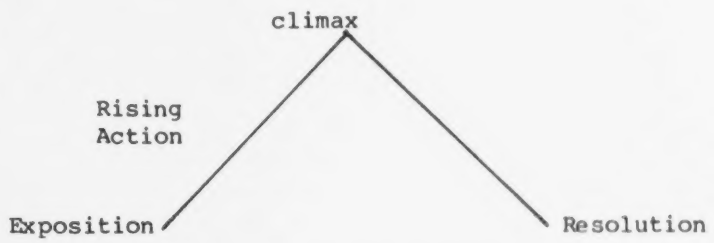
- What effect will Walter's loss of the insurance money have on each member of the family?

- Why do you think Walter did such an irresponsible thing? (naive, immature, desire to fulfill dreams)
- What good long term effects might this experience have on Walter?

- When we discussed Act 1, we noted that Act 1 in all plays serves special functions. What are they?
- We have now completed Act 2. What special functions do you notice that Act 2 serves?

. Develop the conflict or problem further:

. Discuss rising action leading to climax (Act 3)
. Draw pyramid on board as a diagram and explain which element is found in each act.



- Let us list all the complications that emerge in Act 2.
- How do you think these problems will be resolved?

- Develop characters further.

- We have discussed each of the characters before. What further proof do we have for the characteristics we already attribute to each? (Refer to previous notes in notebook.)
- What new aspects of each character has emerged? (Refer to text.)

. Discuss word realism (word "real").

- How can we prove from both acts that this is a realistic play? (diction, setting, problems)

Summary:

- How has Act 2 heightened the suspense of the play?

Application:

- How important is money in leading a happy, peaceful life?

Homework:

- Divide your paper into four columns.
- Head each column with the name of each of the four main characters.
- In each column, list a few characteristics that we now know about each person.
- Find a quote from the first two acts that supports the characteristics you chose.

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 10: Preparation for Acting Two Scenes from Play

Aim:

- What factors must be kept in mind when preparing a scene for oral presentation?
- Why are several interpretations of a character valid?
- What methods does an author utilize to reveal character?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. list factors to be kept in mind when preparing a scene for dramatic presentation.
. discuss why different actors interpret a character differently.
. list signposts in the play that reveal character.
. list characteristics of each main person in the play in descending order of importance.
. divide into groups of four to prepare scenes for dramatic presentation to class.

Motivation:

- Who in the class is interested in acting as a career? Why?

- Why are actors the most important feature in the presentation of a play?

- Why is acting so difficult?

- What are some of the areas of study if you went to acting school? (voice, diction, body movement, character analysis, etc.)

- When we go to a play and find it satisfying, we tend to find that this is the only way it can be done. Yet there are certain roles that many actors want to play, e.g., Hamlet. Why is this so? (Many different interpretations are possible.)

- What clues does an author give that help an actor interpret a character? (dialogue, style directions, what others say about the character, how a character behaves.) List on chalkboard.

- If you are preparing a scene to present to an audience, what must you keep in mind so the audience will understand your character? List on chalkboard. (your interpretation of the character, tone of voice, diction, facial expressions, - how the character moves, etc.)

Development:

. Based on homework assignment, head four columns with each main character and elicit from students applicable characteristics. Students must defend these characteristics by referring to text.

. For each main character, ask:

- Which characteristic is most descriptive of the person? Why? Which is second most important? Why? etc.
- Why is it possible for people to have different opinions about this?

- Each student arranges the list of characteristics in descending order of importance.

. Select two appropriate scenes from Act 1 or Act 2 where three characters interact on stage at the same time.

. Divide class into groups of four - one director and three characters. Discuss function of director.

. Discuss preparation of scene for dramatic presentation to class (each scene will be presented approximately four times).

Summary/Application:

- Why are we presenting each scene four times? Can we expect the presentations to be alike? Why not?

- Why will different actors interpret a character differently?

- How can preparing a scene for dramatic presentation help us understand a character better?

Homework:

- Rehearse your part of the scene for dramatic presentation. (Some class time may be necessary for students who cannot meet with each other after school.)

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 11: Presentation of Scenes

. The class is divided into approximately eight groups of four students each. Four groups will present one scene and four groups another scene.

. As each group presents its scene, have students evaluate the performance by considering the following questions:

- How was the performance different from what you expected from reading the scene?
- Did you have an emotional response to any of the characters portrayed?
- What makes a good performance exciting to watch?

. The purpose of the actors is to convey the "emotional truth" of the scene.
- Based on your knowledge of the play, how well did the actors communicate?

Performances can be evaluated by both emotional and technical criteria. The following lists will help you understand what makes a successful performance. (See also "Classroom Critic's Checklist" from the resource unit, p. 19.)

A. Audience Reaction

- Did the performance make you laugh or want to laugh?
- Did the performance make you feel any of the following emotions? Explain.

  - pity
  - anger
  - sorrow
  - delight

- Did the performance remind you of how a real person would respond to the situation? Explain.
- Did the actor make you believe that his or her feelings were real? Explain.

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, your performers were successfully using what professional actors call their instrument to create character. The following list will help you determine how performers create character.

B. Technical Evaluation

- Vocal presentation:

- Did the actors project voices?
- Was enunciation clear?
- Was pronunciation accurate?
- Were voices properly modulated?
- Was diction realistic?

- Character interpretation:

  - How did actors interpret characters?
  - Were interpretations valid?
  - Does text support interpretation?

- Bodily movements:

  - Did body movements support interpretation?
  - Did facial expressions support interpretation?

Summary: After last presentation:

- How did the dramatization of scenes help us to better understand the characters and situations in the play?

Homework:

- Read Act 3.

- Write a paragraph that answers the following question: How did the loss of the insurance money affect the future plans of each of the main characters?

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 12: Act 3

Aim: How does the loss of the insurance money affect the main characters in the play?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. discuss and list immediate effect on each of the main characters.
. discuss and list long range effect on each of the main characters.
. locate climax of play.
. discuss and evaluate the resolution.

Motivation:

. Place word "crisis" on chalkboard.

- How would you define this word?
- What are some experiences that would qualify as a "crisis"?

. Let's imagine that a teenager loses a parent through death.

- What would be the immediate effect on the young person?
- What would be the long term effect?

. How can a devastating crisis lead to growth?

. Let's explore how our discussion relates to the Younger family's crisis.

Development:

- What is the devastating crisis that occurs to the Youngers?

- What is the immediate reaction of and effect on each of the major characters?

. Emphasize the economic (practical) effect, the emotional effect and the philosophical effect.

. Use textual references:

Beneatha - "Man is foul! And the human race deserves its misery!"
Walter - "See -- that's the old stuff..."
Asagai - "I live the answer!..." etc.

- Who was most hurt by the loss of the money?

- What is the long-term reaction of and effect on each of the main characters?

  (Contextual references, e.g., Walter "What I'm telling you...")

- Lena says "He finally came into his manhood today, didn't he? Kind of like a rainbow after the rain."

  - What does she mean?
  - How has Walter changed?
  - In what ways did the crisis have a positive long-term effect on the Youngers?

- Why did the author have Beneatha and Walter go out quarreling at the end of the play?

- At the end, have the Youngers been defeated or have they triumphed? Explain.

Summary:

- Of all the characters, which one do you admire the most? Why?

Enrichment:

- Discuss literary term "climax." Draw diagram (pyramid) on chalkbord.

- Where is the climax of this play? Why would you locate it at that place?

  - Discuss word "resolution."
  - Did you find the resolution satisfactory? Why/why not?

Homework:

.Place the following quotation on chalkboard:

"Human dignity depends on dreams, even self-deception."

-Write a short paragraph explaining the meaning of this quote. Include in the paragraph: a) Whether or not you agree with this view. b) How this quote is illustrated by the play.

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 13: Summary Lesson

Aim: What are the themes/ideas expressed by Lorraine Hansberry in A Raisin in the Sun?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

. list several themes explored in the play and understand the author's point of view.
. discuss whether they agree or not with the author's views.
. understand how ideas are presented differently in a play than in an essay.

Motivation:

- Students are often called upon to write a composition or an essay. Besides the teacher requiring this piece of writing, why else might one write a composition or essay? (to express personal views or ideas)

- What, then, would one motivating force be for an author to write some literary work? (character motivation, feelings, mood and themes)

- Let us see what ideas/themes Lorraine Hansberry deals with in A Raisin in the Sun.

Development:

.What are some of the issues dealt with in the play?

-Refer to homework assignments and previous notes.

. As each issue is enumerated, ask the students how they feel about the issue and whether they agree or disagree with the author's views.

- Discuss meaning of quote.
- What is the author's definition of love?
- Does love solve many human problems?

- Can prejudice ever be erased from the human race? If not, what can be done to limit the negative effects of prejudice?
- How important is money for happiness?
- How does undergoing a crisis and suffering contribute to maturing?

Summary:

- Lorraine Hansberry is involved in expressing certain ideas. An essay can also express the author's views on certain issues. How is the play different from the essay?

- Why would an author use the drama form as a vehicle for expressing his or her views rather than the essay?

Appreciation/Enrichment:

- Is this play strictly a "Black" play or could it apply to any group?

- What elements define it as a "Black" play?

- What elements are common to all people--universal?

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 14

Aim:

How can we compile and adapt material from the play for a readers theater production?

Performance Objectives: Students will be able to:

- **explain what is meant by readers theater.** [5]
- **select program material for readers theater.**
- **adapt sections of A Raisin in the Sun for readers theater.**

Material:

Worksheet #5, Readers Theater

Motivation:

- Distribute copies of student worksheet and ask for two or three sets of volunteers to read the script.
- After two readings of the script, ask students to describe readers theater.
- Elicit:
  - characterized by two or more oral readers who interpret a script.
  - aimed at stimulating an audience to experience a piece of literature imaginatively.
  - does not require props.
  - emphasis is on what the audience hears rather than on what it sees.
  - use of scripts throughout the performance.

Development:

- We have just studied a play rich in characterization, themes, and language. Today, we will examine how we can use readers theater to express some of the richness of the play.
- What are some of the themes that you would wish to highlight in the play?

5. For further resources of Readers Theater, see *Theater Arts: A Thematic Approach to Integrating the Communication Arts* (New York: New York City Board of Education, 1985).

- List students' suggestions on board.

  Examples:

  - the importance of dreams and hopes for the future
  - the effect of environment on a person's life
  - conflict between pragmatism and idealism

- What kinds of material would you use to highlight this theme?

- Elicit:

  - excerpts from the play
  - prose works
  - poetry
  - posters
  - music
  - dance

- There are very few prepared scripts for readers theater and most people adapt or compile their own material. When you select your material for a readers theater program in drama, it is sometimes necessary to do the following:

  - combine speeches
  - cut out characters
  - change the original scene or act structure
  - cut out scenes
  - use a narrator to fill in events, describe setting, introduce characters

Application:

. Divide the class into groups of five.

. Have each group to decide on a theme developed in the play.

. Have students select material to create a fifteen minute program around this theme.

. Ask students to write the script for the program.

. Allow groups time to rehearse the script.

. Have students present the programs to the class.

Worksheet 5

Readers Theater

Reader one: A lone reader sits in a satin pool of light.

Reader two: He looks into the imagination of his audience.

Both readers: He believes,

Reader two: And velvet images touch the silent air of the theatre.

Reader one: A second reader appears,

Reader two: Then a third,

Reader one: And a fourth.

Both readers: All together they create

Reader one: the setting,

Reader two: touch life to sleeping characters,

Reader one: And the words on the page before them

Both readers: live again

Reader one: as when the author had first sought to create.

Reader two: Readers theatre,

Reader one: Readers theatre --

Reader two: a group activity in which the best of literature is communicated from the manuscript to an audience

Both readers: through the oral interpretation approach of vocal and physical suggestion --

Reader two: says one.

Reader one: But more

Reader two: more

Reader one: much more

Both readers: is readers theatre!

Reader two: For the audience,

Worksheet 5 (continued)

Reader one: For the reader,

Both readers: It is a shared experience. [6]

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6. Excerpted from material written by Tim Bryson in *Creative Communication*, Fran Averett Tanner (Caldwell, Idaho: Clark Publishing Company, 1973), pp. 339-340.

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